

Eisenhower West Draft Vision Statement and Goals

September 2, 2014

VISION: *If this plan is successful, what will Eisenhower West be like in 2040?*

Imagine walking out your front door, grabbing coffee and the newspaper along lively Pickett Street. You cross onto the spacious sidewalk of the bridge that connects across the railroad tracks. You pause at the center of the bridge to take in the view of the expansive Eisenhower Valley and a naturalized Backlick Run. As you approach the end of the bridge, you see the bustling Van Dorn Metro station, full of people connecting to the greater Washington, DC metro area. You notice the bright blue buses of the West End Transitway as they approach the Metro station to drop off and collect passengers, you hear the sounds of water falling from a fountain, the chatter of people on their way to work and school, and the conversations as passengers purchase food from nearby vendors.

You feel the breeze of cyclists passing by on their journey from nearby trails along Backlick Run, Cameron Run, and Holmes Run to their work places along the green boulevard of Eisenhower Avenue, the hub of small-scale, creative manufacturing for Alexandria. Larger industries in the area are surrounded by a village of smaller industries focused on everything from creating devices that improve everyday technologies to food and drink production to marketing companies that promote the work of scientific innovation.

You take a stroll with your family along Backlick Run Trail, the green spine of the neighborhood that connects people to the innovation boulevard of Eisenhower Avenue. As you walk along the trail that leads to Ben Brenman Park, you describe to your children the science of industry through interpretive signage showcasing industrial uses, manufacturing technology, and stormwater management. You emerge from the park energized and pleased with this place you have chosen as home. Eisenhower West, a place to innovate, recreate, learn, and connect to the region.

VISION STATEMENT:

Building on its unique assets, Eisenhower West will showcase a variety of uses, including thriving commercial and light industrial businesses along Eisenhower Avenue, an active Van Dorn Metro station, a vibrant Pickett Street that includes retail, residential uses, and restaurants, and a better connected community through the West End Transitway. Residents and visitors will have access to cultural and civic amenities, high-quality parks and green spaces, active and passive recreation options, and a revitalized local stream system. Walkability and connectivity will be enhanced to allow community members to travel through a safe and pleasant environment to their daily destinations. The vision for Eisenhower West will be achieved through phased implementation, interim uses, and community amenities to attract future development. **Eisenhower West will provide a high quality of life for a culturally, economically, and generationally diverse community.**

GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES: *How can we achieve this vision?*

LAND USE

Goal: Eisenhower West will have a vibrant mix of uses including office, commercial, light industrial, and residential with community facilities, services, and amenities achieved through phased implementation.

- Ensure a balance among uses to allow residents to live, work, shop, and recreate in the area.
- Maximize office, retail/restaurant, entertainment, hotel, residential and senior housing nearest to the Van Dorn Metro Station. More specifically, prioritize office, retail, and hotel uses within a ¼ mile of the Van Dorn Metro station.
- Phase out uses incompatible with transit-oriented development near the Van Dorn Metro station.
- Evaluate the need and potential sites for new public facilities, including a school.
- Provide and enhance existing unique destination retail and restaurants to maintain the neighborhood identity and allow residents to shop near their homes.
- Allow interim temporary retail, including destination retail and big box retail, along Eisenhower Avenue.
- Remove opportunities for new uses that cause noise and environmental pollution, traffic hazards, and unattractive visual appearances.
- Improve the pedestrian experience in the industrial and warehouse areas along Eisenhower Avenue, Pickett Street, and Farrington Avenue.

HOUSING

Goal: Eisenhower West will be a neighborhood that is accessible to a variety of income levels, ages, and household sizes through a range of housing types.

- Create a balanced mix of quality housing options with units in a variety of sizes.
- Consider the provision of age-restricted housing so options are available for residents to age in place.
- Preserve existing affordable and market affordable housing.
- Foster and secure affordable housing units in new residential development, including rental and/or homeownership units affordable to a range of income levels.

BUILDING HEIGHT + SIZE

Goal: Eisenhower West will be a transit-oriented community that features taller buildings closer to the Van Dorn Metro station and along Van Dorn Street.

- Place medium to high density and mid-rise to high-rise buildings roughly within a ½ mile radius of the Van Dorn Metro Station.
- Place low to medium density development, and low-rise to mid-rise buildings, beyond the ½ mile radius of the Van Dorn Metro Station along Pickett Street and Eisenhower Avenue.
- Ensure adequate parking is provided, but at appropriate levels. Provide less parking, consistent with transit-oriented development standards on sites within a ½ mile of the Van Dorn Metro Station.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Eisenhower West will be an integrated part of the economic engine of the Eisenhower Valley in which economic development, employment opportunities, and job creation are promoted.

- Make Eisenhower West an attractive and amenity-rich location for new and existing businesses.
- Increase utilization of sites to strengthen neighborhood fabric and attract an increased population to support local businesses.
- Consider innovative interim uses, such as pop up retail or food trucks that will introduce economic activity pending future redevelopment.
- Support and retain existing restaurant, retail, and specialty businesses that serve and/or target ethnically, socially, and economically diverse customer bases.
- Preserve and promote opportunities for small businesses and incubators, including green technology and specialty industry.
- Preserve affordable retail and business space.
- Maximize the variety of uses to promote job creation and economic sustainability.
- Preserve existing jobs to the extent possible.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER + SERVICES

Goal: Eisenhower West will have an abundance of services appropriate for a transit-oriented neighborhood with a diverse group of residents, visitors, and businesses.

- Integrate civic, institutional, and cultural amenities, such as schools and recreation centers, throughout Eisenhower West to enhance livability.
- Improve and increase amenities to meet the needs of residents and businesses in the area.
- Celebrate the neighborhood's natural, historic, and cultural resources, including its unique mix of ethnic restaurants.
- Embrace the area's industrial heritage.
- Ensure high quality and unique design of buildings and public spaces.
- Create places and opportunities for cultural events, performances, and public art.

STREETSCAPE + PUBLIC SPACE

Goal: Eisenhower West will have a safe and active public realm for enjoyment by residents and visitors of all ages and abilities focused on Eisenhower Avenue, Van Dorn Street, and Pickett Street.

- Promote and increase connectivity by improving the appearance, walkability, safety and cleanliness of sidewalks, crosswalks, and public spaces.
- Enhance streetscape and the public realm with improved wayfinding signage, lighting, street furnishings, crosswalks, paving, and vegetation.
- Improve and maintain existing trees while adding new street trees and plantings.
- Integrate sustainable landscaping with new development.
- Integrate civic parks or plazas in areas of higher density development.
- Include fountains or other water features to provide activity and cooling.
- Provide outdoor seating areas for restaurants and cafes.

CIRCULATION + CONNECTIVITY

Goal: Eisenhower West will have safe, efficient, and linked pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicular mobility.

- Promote Eisenhower Avenue as the central spine and corridor of the Eisenhower Valley.
- Improve mobility by integrating pedestrians, cars, buses, bicycle facilities, bikesharing, and rail transit in the transportation network.
- Enhance and increase transit, pedestrian, and bicycle connectivity to and from the Van Dorn Metrorail Station.
- Add bikeshare stations at major destinations in Eisenhower West.
- Provide clear, well-marked, and safe pedestrian and bicycle access to transit, particularly within the ½ -mile radius of the Van Dorn Metro station.
- Ensure easy and accessible pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to the proposed West End Transitway stations and Backlick Run.
- Provide a transportation network that is integrated with the recommended network in the adjacent Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan.
- Create contiguous sidewalks to improve walkability throughout Eisenhower West.
- Provide safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities and crossings to schools, transit, parks and other community amenities.
- Implement the planned multi-modal bridge.
- Implement the Farrington Road extension to Edsall Road to improve circulation and development opportunities.
- Protect residential areas from increased traffic.

PARKS, OPEN SPACE + RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Goal: Eisenhower West will have a connected, accessible, and identifiable open space system featuring the green spine of Backlick Run and a growing network of adjoining parks, trails, and green space.

- Provide greenways, trails, and pedestrian connections between parks and other destinations in Eisenhower West.
- Increase tree cover throughout Eisenhower West, particularly along Eisenhower Avenue and Van Dorn Street.
- Enhance and naturalize Backlick Run to make it the green heart of the Eisenhower West area.
- Connect trails within the stream corridors of Cameron Run, Backlick Run, and Holmes Run to surrounding neighborhoods, making them active and accessible places.
- Continue to enhance Armistead Boothe Park.
- Preserve and enhance Ben Brenman Park, Hensley Park, and Clermont Park and provide increased and improved connections to the surrounding areas.
- Identify sites for a variety of new high-quality green spaces including passive green spaces, pocket parks, active green spaces, athletic fields, playgrounds, and dog parks.
- Provide increased and enhanced opportunities for recreational programs, classes, and activities.

SUSTAINABILITY + ENVIRONMENT

Goal: Eisenhower West will have a healthy natural resources system that will foster stewardship among its residents.

- Employ sustainable building and site design strategies in all new development.
- Decrease neighborhood flooding and improve stormwater management through low-impact development strategies, particularly in areas within the 100-year floodplain.
- Require enhanced detention of stormwater with new development.
- Incentivize the relocation or reconstruction of existing buildings located within the 100-year floodplain.
- Reduce impervious surfaces, and increase pervious surfaces throughout Eisenhower West.
- Reduce pollution and greenhouse gases by increasing tree cover, and creating opportunities for non-motorized travel.
- Implement the principles of Alexandria's *EcoCity Charter*.

IMPLEMENTATION

Goal: The Eisenhower West vision will be achieved through phased implementation focused on prioritizing the improvement and addition of neighborhood amenities and services.

- Initial phases will: focus on interim uses such as large format retail, pop-up retail, and innovative/emerging technology firms to attract development to Eisenhower Avenue.
- Add amenities and services from initial developments that will attract further economic development to the area.
- Give priority to land uses that achieve the economic objective of the small area plan.
- Maximize development contributions to achieve the needed facilities, infrastructure, and amenities for future development of the area.
- Ensure the Van Dorn Metro station area is redeveloped for higher density commercial uses.